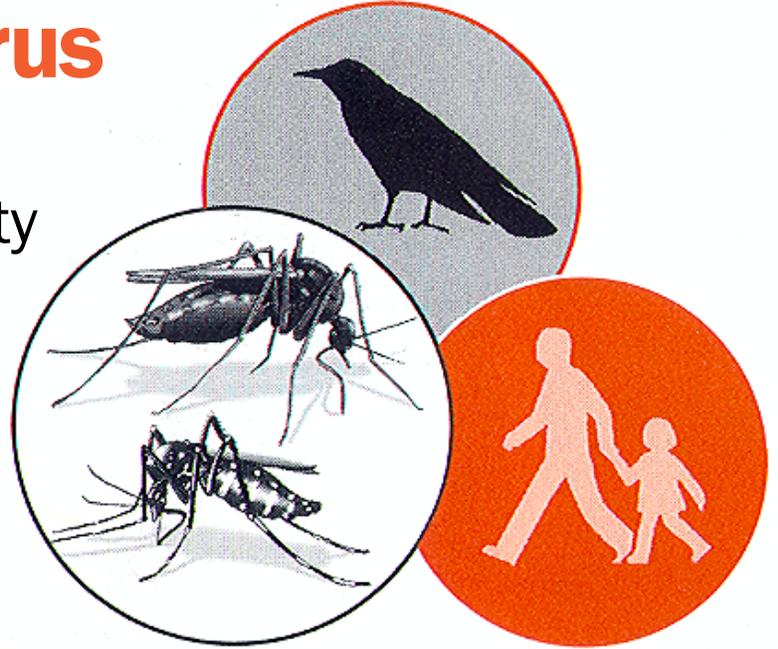




West Nile Virus

What People in Montgomery County Need to Know



What is West Nile Virus?

West Nile Virus is a disease transmitted from infected birds to people by mosquitoes. Although most people who are infected suffer no ill effects or only mild flu-like symptoms, a small number of infected people develop encephalitis or meningitis (inflammation of brain or brain lining) and die or have severe and lasting complications.

West Nile Virus was first identified in Uganda in 1937. It first appeared in the United States in New York City in 1999 and it spread across the country. It is now considered endemic (constantly present) in this area and throughout the U.S. To date there is no cure for West Nile Virus.

How People Become Infected with West Nile Virus

There are three things that must happen to spread West Nile Virus:

- There must be an infected bird.
- A mosquito must bite the bird and become infected.
- The infected mosquito must then transfer the virus by biting a person.

Health officials believe that people do not get West Nile Virus directly from a bird, other animals or an infected person.

The mosquito is necessary to spread the virus.

That is why the best way to prevent West Nile Virus is to get rid of mosquito breeding places.

With fewer mosquitoes, the transmission cycle is broken or greatly weakened.

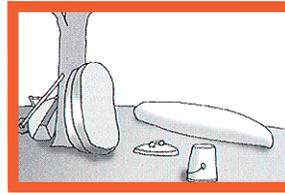
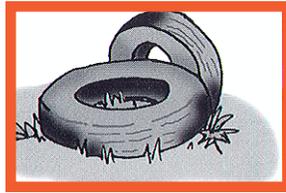
The best way to prevent West Nile Virus is to keep mosquitoes from breeding and biting.

What You Can Do to Reduce the Risk of Becoming Infected with West Nile Virus

- Eliminate standing water on your property. Check at least once a week. (children's wading pools, buckets, wheelbarrows, canoes and garbage can lids)
- Help your neighbors find and eliminate standing water.

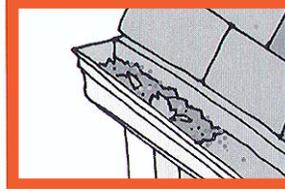
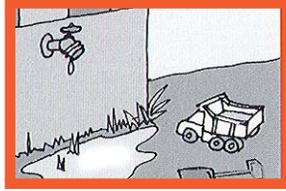
To Reduce Mosquitoes, Eliminate Places Where They Can Breed

Throw away used tires. For tire swings, drill holes in the bottom of the tire so water will drain.



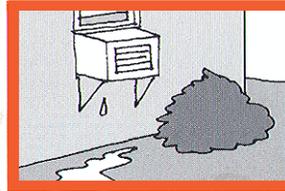
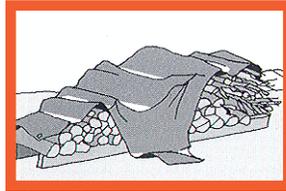
Turn over children's wading pools, buckets, wheelbarrows, canoes and garbage can lids.

Fix dripping outdoor water faucets.



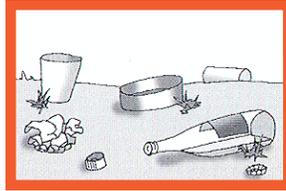
Clean out roof gutters and down-spout screens.

Drain water trapped in folds and arrange tarp so water runs off.



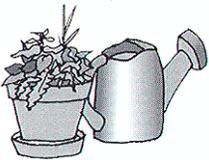
Get rid of puddles from window air conditioners.

Dispose of trash such as bottle caps, open drink cans or bottles, styrofoam cups, foil or plastic food wrappers.



Flush birdbaths and saucers under potted plants at least once a week.

For water you cannot totally eliminate



- Dump or flush out once a week (if any mosquito eggs or larva were in the water they will not be able to develop to adults). Remember to check flower pots on balconies of apartment buildings too.

- Add fish or aerator or larvicide (mosquito dunks) to ornamental ponds. The fish will eat mosquito eggs and larvae. An aerator will keep water moving. (Water must be stagnant for adult mosquitoes to develop.) Larvicide will prevent mosquito larva from developing. If you use mosquito dunks, check your pond regularly and replace dunks when necessary. Animals such as squirrels, raccoons and dogs like to eat mosquito dunks. This does not hurt the animal.



Protect Yourself and Your Family Against Mosquito Bites



- Avoid mosquito infested areas.
- Limit outdoor activities at peak times of mosquito biting.
- Use fine-mesh screens on open windows and doors.
- Repair tears or large holes in these screens.
- Wear light-colored and loose-fitting clothing. Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.

- Use insect repellants when outdoors (follow directions on the container). Spray clothes **before** putting them on.



Mosquitoes in Montgomery County

There are many different species of mosquitoes in the world but only a few live in Montgomery County. The two most common are *Culex*, a common northern mosquito, and *Aedes albopictus*, the Asian Tiger.

Culex are native mosquitoes that are most active from dusk to dawn when people are less likely to be outdoors. They are gray-brown colored, lay eggs in both large and small bodies of water and can fly about a mile or two.

The *Asian Tiger* is a non-native mosquito that is spreading throughout Montgomery County. It is smaller than our native mosquitoes and has distinctive black and white stripes. The Asian Tiger is out during the day when many people, especially children, are out.

The *Asian Tiger* breeds **only** in containers from old tires to tree holes, not in wetlands normally associated with mosquitoes. Asian Tigers will breed in any container but they prefer containers outdoors, in the shade and with dark, stained water high in organic content to containers indoors, in the sun or with clear, clean water.

Asian Tiger mosquitoes live around people in urban and suburban areas and are strongly attracted to people (some other types of mosquitoes prefer biting animals but will bite humans). Because Asian Tigers fly no more than 200 to 300 yards from the containers where they hatched, the most effective method of controlling them is to remove or drain containers where they breed.

What to Do When You Find a Dead Bird

The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) has discontinued testing of dead birds for West Nile virus (WNV) in Maryland. West Nile virus has now been detected in human and animal populations in nearly all jurisdictions in Maryland, and is expected to return each year. In recent years, WNV activity has dropped steadily in Maryland and surrounding states. State and local health officials continue to monitor this activity through surveillance of mosquito and human populations.

If you find a dead bird, please dispose of it as follows:

- (1) Wear plastic or latex gloves or use a plastic bag as a glove
- (2) With your gloved hand, place or wrap the bird in a plastic bag and tie the bag securely (alternatively, a shovel may be used to pick up bird)
- (3) Dispose of the bag (and gloves) in an outdoor trash receptacle, and
- (4) Wash your hands with soap and water.

For More Information

Centers for Disease Control West Nile Website:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/>

Communicable Disease Program

Department of Health and Human Services
240-777-1755

Used Tire Disposal

Call 311

Maryland West Nile Website:

www.edcp.org/html/west_nile.html

<http://www.mda.state.md.us/plants-pests/>

[mosquito_control/_asian_tiger_mosquito_md.php?&view=print](http://www.mda.state.md.us/plants-pests/mosquito_control/_asian_tiger_mosquito_md.php?&view=print)

Stagnant Water on Private Property

Housing Code Enforcement

Department of Housing and Community Affairs

Call 311

Storm Drain Blockage

Department of Transportation

Call 311

Stormwater Ponds/Standing Water

Department of Environmental Protection

Call 311